

DISTRICT ONE REPUBLICANS
3451 Arnold St.
Ketchikan, AK 99901

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December 27, 2005

Commissioner Mike Barton
Alaska Department of Transportation
Juneau, AK 99811

VIA EMAIL

Re: STIP COMMENTS

Commissioner Barton:

On behalf of District One Republicans, I would like to submit the following STIP comments relative to the Gravina Island Bridge.

**GOAL: PROGRAM THE FINAL STIP TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION BIDDING IN 2006
FOR THE GRAVINA ISLAND BRIDGE PROJECT.**

The Department of Transportation must program this project in the final STIP in a manner which allows for going out to construction bid in 2006 while having the least impact on the rest of the state.

Commissioner, as you know Ketchikan overwhelmingly voted in favor of the bridge and we still support the F-1 alternative. As we work toward our common goal of making this project reality, I would ask that at your direction, the Department of Transportation produce a realistic financing plan and have it approved by the Federal Highway Administration as soon as possible. Please also look into all available tools at your disposal, including advance construction, which can get this project on the street by the end of calendar year 2006.

The Ralph M. Bartholomew Veterans Memorial Bridge is Ketchikan's future. We, and the Delegation, have been working on this project for over 30 years. With the closure of our pulp mill, the bridge has taken on an even more urgent role in our economic recovery. I look forward to your insight and knowledge as we work together to bring this project to reality.

Best Regards,

Cliff Skillings
Chairman, District One Republicans

Cc: Senator Burt Stedman
 Representative Jim Elkins
 Commissioner Mike Barton
 City of Ketchikan
 Ketchikan Gateway Borough